

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending and claim 11 has been amended. Support for the amendments to claim 11 appear, *inter alia*, on page 1, lines 14-17 and page 6, lines 18-21.

Applicants' election of claims 11-16, with traverse, is affirmed. The election requirement is not believed to be necessary since an examination of both sets of claims would not be a burden on the examiner considering that a thorough search of either set would require searching certain sections of classes 422 and 585. Accordingly, the examiner is requested to withdraw the restriction requirement.

The objection to the specification is believed to have been alleviated by the submission of a new specification.

Claims 11, 12, 15 and 16 stand rejected as anticipated by WO 98/16463 (equivalent to US 6,375,920).

This rejection is not applicable to amended claim 11 for several reasons.

First of all, the process of WO '463 (from US equivalent) does not involve a gaseous reactant and a liquid reactant, but rather two gaseous reactants, i.e., oxygen and hydrogen. The water and/or alcohol are reaction media in this reference.

Secondly, the process of WO '463 is not operated under isothermal conditions. There is no teaching or suggestion of using a reactor wherein the heat of reaction is transferred through the reactor to fluid medium on the reactor wall surface facing away from the reactor space. In WO '463 the heat is transferred to the liquid reaction

medium which is recycled to the reactor after being cooled by a heat exchanger, i.e., col. 7, lines 16-18.

In addition to the above reasons, the rejection is not applicable to claims 15 and 16 since there is no single embodiment in the reference which includes these limitations.

Claims 13 and 14 stand rejected as obvious over WO 98/16463 (equivalent to US 6,375,920).

These claims are not obvious for the same reasons as recited in the above rejection.

Additionally, optimizing the process of WO '463 would not necessarily lead to the claimed superficial liquid velocities since the process is different from the claimed process.

Favorable action by the examiner is solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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